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9 December 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Executive Director
Executive Secretary

FROM: J. Kenneth McDonald
Chief, History Staff

SUBJECT: Release of Declassified OSS Records to the National Archives, and Status of DCI Histories

REFERENCE: Memo for C/HS fm DCI, dtd 1 December 1983, Subj: Declassification of Historically Significant Files

1. On 26 August you asked me to find out what the Agency had done and what we could do to release the declassified OSS records in CIA's custody to the National Archives for release to the public. A full report on where we stand is attached. Its final paragraph includes four specific recommendations for your approval.

2. In transferring the first increment of CIA's declassified OSS, SSU, and CIG records to the National Archives in 1980, the Agency restricted the release of former OSS members' names. Finding this restriction unworkable, the National Archives did not process and release the records already received, and CIA did not send them any more. The Agency's restriction appears to have been in error, since neither the Privacy Act (which CIA cited) nor any other law or regulation provides for such a restriction. In light of this, the Agency's custodian of these records is willing to to withdraw the restriction, and to transfer the documents in question--following a quick final check of their declassification--to the National Archives for public release after final processing by the Archives' Declassification Division.

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3. The reference memorandum also asks where we stand on the Helms and Colby DCI histories. The Helms DCI history is roughly three-quarters completed in draft, and should be finished next summer. I would be glad to send you the completed draft chapters, which Mr. Helms has approved. Richard Lehman, having been drafted into a highly classified project of which I understand you are aware, has had to set aside his work on the Colby DCI history. He does not now expect to be able to complete this until early 1985. Since he is uniquely qualified to do this history and has completed extensive documentary research, I have agreed to this schedule.

4. I should also report that my deputy, [redacted] is on schedule with her one-volume survey history of CIA, and will produce a draft manuscript by the end of 1984. Staff historian [redacted] should complete a draft of his overhead reconnaissance monograph by next March.

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[redacted]
J. Kenneth McDonald

Attachment

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C/HS/DCI/JKMcD:nk1/[] (9 Dec 83)

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